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Surveying American State Police Agencies About Lone Wolves, Far-Right Criminality, and Far-Right and Islamic *Jihadist* Criminal Collaboration

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This study presents state police agencies' perceptions about three significant terrorism issues on which there is little empirical research. All three issues have significant implications for understanding the role of state police agencies in responding to terrorism threats. First, the authors investigated whether the respondents believed that supporters of specified extremist movements tended to commit crimes as lone wolves, with others, or both alone and with others. Second, they were asked to provide data to gauge how often far-right extremists committed 13 crime types that varied in magnitude and motivation. Third, they were asked if they had knowledge about whether far-right extremists and Islamic jihadists had cooperated to commit crimes. These data were collected by surveying the 50 state police agencies in the United States. The results indicate that state police officials are concerned with both group and lone-wolf activities. Importantly, there was variation in the potential for lone-wolf crimes when comparing different types of extremist movements. The results indicate that far-right extremists are involved in a range of terrorist, preparatory, and routine criminal activities, but this involvement varies by region. Two state police agencies also indicated that they knew of Islamic and far-right collaboration. The study identified two other instances of direct collaboration and a number of other interesting cases through open source searches. The article concludes with a discussion of the policy implications of the findings and outlines directions for future research.

The terrorist attacks that occurred on 11 September 2001 transformed the United States. For a variety of reasons, such as the availability of funding and a desire to understand these transformations, the attacks increased academic attention to the study of terrorism. Although there were excellent terrorism studies published before the 2001 attacks,¹ this research was seen as a fringe topic scattered across different disciplines. Post-9/11, however, such research has become an interdisciplinary priority topic of concern. Scholarly attention, however, has focused primarily on international terrorism. On one hand, this makes sense considering Al Qaeda's role in the attacks and its continuing attempts to plan attacks despite law enforcement and military scrutiny. There has been less attention paid to homegrown terrorist threats within the United States. This is an important gap because the threat from domestic movements is significant and may be increasing due to the political shifts that occurred in 2008.² Freilich, Chermak, and Simone found that state police agencies are concerned about the criminal danger posed by *jihadists*, as well as domestic far-right neo-Nazi, militia, and racist Skinheads and extreme left-wing environmental and animal rights movements.³

This study seeks to better understand the terrorist threat within the boundaries of the United States. It presents American state police agencies' perceptions about three significant terrorism and public safety issues. This study is important because there is little empirical research examining these issues even though all have implications for understanding the role of state agencies in responding to terrorism threats and understanding how they interpret the significance of these issues.

First, whether supporters of 15 specified extremist movements tended to commit crimes as lone wolves, with others, or both alone and with others was asked. Second, the respondents were asked to provide data to gauge how often far-right extremists committed 13 crime types (such as tax refusal, gun crimes, hate crimes, etc.) that varied in magnitude (violent versus nonviolent) and motivation (ideological versus non-ideological). Third, if they had knowledge about whether far-right extremists had cooperated with Islamic *jihadists* to commit crimes was asked. Toward this goal, a survey was mailed to the 50 state police agencies in the United States. Forty-two states (84 percent) responded, 37 of which (74 percent) submitted surveys.

As noted, political extremists pose a risk to the American community.⁴ Recently, attention has focused on Al Qaeda because of its desire to attack within the United States.

However, LaFree, Dugan, Fogg, and Scott found that domestic attacks usually constitute 85 percent of all terrorist strikes in the United States in a typical year.⁵ Hewitt found that between 1954 and 2000 over 3,000 terrorist incidents claimed over 700 lives and caused tremendous financial damage in the United States.⁶

Freilich and Chermak's ongoing United States Extremist Crime Database (ECDB) study finds that the harm caused by political extremists is greater.⁷ Their study does not limit itself to "terrorism" incidents and instead examines all crimes committed by far-right extremists in the United States since 1990.⁸ The ECDB includes federal and state crimes, offenses committed by groups and lone wolves, violent and nonviolent crimes, and ideological and non-ideological offenses. The ECDB has identified over 4,000 criminal events, including over 300 homicide incidents involving more than 550 homicide victims (and over 375 homicide victims excluding the Oklahoma City bombing). Importantly, the victims included 45 law enforcement personnel, three security officers, and one judge killed in the line of duty. Twenty-two far-right extremists were also killed by law enforcement personnel and another 38 far-right extremists committed suicide.

Other research indicates that far-left extremists also pose a significant threat to public safety. For example, Smith and Damphousse's American Terrorism Study documents the large-scale property damage and financial losses that attacks by mostly left-wing environmental and animal rights extremists have caused in the United States.⁹ The terrorist group "The Family," for instance, committed 21 arson and "ecotage" incidents between 1995 and 2001. Their most severe act was an arson attack at the Vail ski resort in the late 1990s that caused over \$25 million dollars in damage.

It is important to gauge law enforcement's estimates of whether specified extremist movements (including a variety of far-right movements, environmental and animal rights extremists, and Islamic *jihadists*) tend to commit crimes as lone wolves, the nature of far-right criminality, and whether far-right extremists are collaborating with *jihadists* to commit crimes. These findings could aid law enforcement, intelligence analysts, and policymakers in their efforts to understand the nature of the terrorist threat in the United States. Although these issues have recently garnered publicity, most accounts have focused on anecdotal cases. For instance, in 2009 a series of high-profile attacks by far-right racists in Pittsburgh (3 police officers slain in the line of duty), Florida (2 police officers killed in the line of duty), Washington, D.C.'s Holocaust Museum (one security guard killed), and Kansas (one abortion provider killed) were committed by lone-wolf suspects. Similarly, a shooting spree by a lone *jihadist* at Fort Hood killed 13 in November, while an earlier attack by a lone-wolf *jihadist* killed one soldier and wounded another outside a military recruiting office in Arkansas in the spring. Although lone-wolf offenders are of "great concern to law enforcement" according to a recent FBI memo, there is no empirical research that documents state or local police concerns about lone-wolf threats.¹⁰ While the State and Local Anti-Terrorism (SLATT) program, which is funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, is currently examining lone-wolf trends, the SLATT database is for law enforcement use only and its publications are used for training purposes. Importantly, each of the just mentioned attacks received national coverage and many accounts noted the lone-wolf aspect of the suspects. The media coverage was unable, however, to place the nature of these attacks in context because scientific research on the topic is lacking.

It is necessary to obtain a better understanding of the crime types committed by extremist groups. Most terrorism research only examines criminal acts that are defined/labeled as terrorism.¹¹ There are three weaknesses with this approach: First, there is disagreement about what constitutes "terrorism" among policymakers and academics. Schmid and Jongman found that academics writing on this topic used over 100 different definitions of terrorism in their work.¹² There is little consistency across geographic and political

spectrums about what acts should be defined as terrorism. Second, ongoing preliminary research indicates that terrorists commit a large number of precursor crimes to fund operations and specific attacks.¹³ There may be value in attempting to better understand the involvement of extremists in all types of criminal activities. Third, a systematic literature review of over 320 published studies on far-right extremism found that far-right extremists were linked to crime types that varied in magnitude (e.g., nonviolent tax refusal versus antigovernment attacks) and motivation (e.g., drug-dealing for profit, versus ideologically motivated hate crimes).¹⁴ There was little systematic research, however, that explored their involvement in various crime types and most of the studies relied on archival information.

Recently, there has also been speculation that supporters of two seemingly disparate movements—far-right extremists and Islamic *jihadists*—might be converging due to shared grievances.¹⁵ Such collaboration, if it is occurring, has implications for understanding the motivations of these two movements, their commitment to ideological doctrine, and how best to respond to terrorist threats. It would also pose challenges to law enforcement because it is possible that different movements bring unique skills and knowledge to such a shared endeavor.

The current study aims to begin filling these gaps by presenting the perceptions of American state police agencies on these important issues. The relevant literature on these three issues is described next.

Review of Literature

The Threat of Lone-Wolf Crimes

Scholars and law enforcement officers have long been concerned with the “lone-wolf” threat. This tactic is thought to be more difficult to counter, than the danger posed by organized, top-down entities. Lone-wolf attacks are illegal incidents that are committed by a single political extremist. This type of attack encompasses both planned attacks committed by a single suspect (like the killing of the abortion provider in Kansas during the spring of 2009) as well as presented opportunities, such as a routine call for service that brings a lone suspect in contact with a target s/he ideologically loathes (for example, the domestic violence dispute in the home of a racist skinhead in Pittsburgh in April 2009 that led to the murder of 3 police officers who responded to the call).¹⁶

The far right has debated the efficacy of this tactic for almost 50 years. In the 1960s some far-right leaders called for this strategy to be used against Chinese and other Communist forces that they feared would invade the United States.¹⁷ Recently, this tactic has also been employed by both domestic *jihadists* and mostly far-left environmental extremists.¹⁸ Kaplan explains that the benefit of the lone-wolf tactic is that “while the state has proven over and over again that it could effortlessly penetrate any right-wing [or other type of extremist] organization, it has yet to develop the capability to thwart the will of one man acting alone!”¹⁹ Damphousse notes that far-right leaders changed their strategies in response to law enforcement and government actions that eliminated organized far-right revolutionary groups (like the notorious “The Order”) in the 1980s.²⁰ Louis Beam, William Pierce, Richard Kelly Hoskins, David Lane (a member of the Order then imprisoned for life), and other far-right leaders concluded that the organized nature of these groups allowed the government to infiltrate the groups and “flip” their members and thus locate and arrest the entire group.²¹ These leaders thus explicitly endorsed lone-wolf tactics. Damphousse writes that “the concept of ‘leaderless resistance’ was an effort to shield leaders of the violent right from being exposed to criminal prosecution . . . the result was a shift from

large terrorism enterprises (the focus of the federal authorities) to the creation of the ‘lone wolf.’”²²

Damphousse and Smith used indictment data from the ground-breaking American Terrorism Study (ATS) and tentatively concluded that there had been an increase in the use of leaderless resistance and lone-wolf tactics by right-wing terrorists in the United States.²³ From 1992–2002 the size of right-wing terrorist groups prosecuted became smaller and the number of counts increased per indictment issued in federal court compared to the size of terrorist groups prosecuted and the number of counts per indictments issued between 1980 and 1992. This study only examined right-wing terrorists. In addition, the ATS only includes cases investigated by the FBI that were prosecuted on the federal level and excludes ideologically motivated acts (such as a lone-wolf Skinhead hate crime murder) that are typically prosecuted in state courts.

It is important to examine state police perceptions of the lone-wolf threat from other extremist movements. Besides recent high-profile lone-wolf attacks perpetrated by far-right extremists and *jihadists* in the United States, Leader and Probst note that ELF (the Earth Liberation Front), currently a leading extremist movement, explicitly endorses lone-wolf tactics on its Web page.²⁴ Indeed, the website used to allow its supporters to access the site to list the independent crimes they committed to further the movement. Joose concludes that the use of lone-wolf tactics and leaderless resistance besides avoiding infiltration also makes it less likely for ideological disputes to hamper the movement.²⁵ The lone-wolf tactic allows movement supporters to act on its behalf and record their actions on ELF’s website. This decentralization allows the movement to increase its mobilization potential and avoid ideological disputes.

This study examines state police perceptions of the lone-wolf threat across a variety of far-right, far-left, single issue, and *jihadist* extremist movements. By investigating 15 movements that span the ideological divide the hope is to provide evidence that will allow law enforcement to rank the movements in terms of their lone-wolf threat potential. This will aid law enforcement in prioritizing threats and allocating resources.

The Nature of Far-Right Criminality

This study examines the different types of offenses committed by ideological extremists for several reasons. First, most empirical studies examining “terrorism” limit their “universe” to crimes that fall under the FBI’s terrorism definition (i.e., violent crimes, generally claimed by a group, and prosecuted on the federal level, or preparatory crimes committed to further the terrorist act).²⁶ Limiting data collection in this way, however, systematically excludes an important part of the picture.²⁷ For example, a review of over 320 studies of far-right criminal activities demonstrates that far-right extremists have been investigated by federal and state authorities and that they are involved in a variety of criminal acts, violent and nonviolent, as well as ideological and non-ideological/routine crimes.²⁸

Second, it is important to know whether ideological offenders—both terrorist and non-terrorist—tend to also commit non-ideological “routine” crimes. Both the terrorism and the criminological literatures have rarely engaged this issue. Some criminologists, like Gottfredson and Hirschi, claim that terrorism is different from ordinary crime.²⁹ Thus, terrorists (and they imply other ideological offenders) possess higher levels of self-control and should therefore not commit non-ideological, non-preparatory routine crimes. Conversely, other criminologists (e.g., Blazak on strain theory, and Hamm on social learning theory),³⁰ contend that the same factors are associated with both ideological and non-ideological crimes. These theorists would expect ideologically motivated offenders to also commit

non-ideological, routine crimes. Indeed, Bakker's study of 242 European *jihadists* found that many of them had a criminal record for a non-ideological offense.³¹

Examining all crimes committed by political extremists would allow an investigation of whether any relationship exists between non-ideological and ideologically motivated crimes. Some ideologically motivated terrorist groups have evolved into organized crime syndicates,³² while some profit motivated criminals have evolved into ideological offenders. Similarly, certain terrorist groups have recruited from organized crime groups. For example, Smith documents how a criminal gang (El Rukns) was radicalized from committing routine, organized crime to planning ideological offenses (e.g., they were supposed to have received \$2.5 million from Qadafi).³³ Further, some "terrorists" are reluctant participants and are not strongly committed to an extremist ideology. McGarrell, Freilich, and Chermak discuss how nearly 70 percent of the individuals linked to a series of bombings and detained terrorists in Turkey were not ideologically committed.³⁴

Third, it is important to investigate the seriousness of the acts perpetrated by terrorists. Many terrorist incidents receive considerable attention in the news media,³⁵ but the salience and prominence of such coverage is usually determined by the seriousness of the act. Much of the public may believe that the criminal behaviors of terrorists are rare but they mostly commit violent and mass-casualty offenses. A focus on the most violent offenses might lead to missed opportunities in exploring how criminal behaviors might escalate from nonviolent to violent activities. If terrorists have a history of being involved in a range of nonviolent offenses, it would be important to explore possible escalation patterns of these offenders.

Finally, research indicates that terrorists frequently are involved in non-terrorist, preparatory crimes.³⁶ These acts are committed to finance terrorist organizations as well as provide specific material to carry out terrorist actions. In addition, there is some discussion that terrorist groups are becoming involved in a variety of offenses.³⁷ Unfortunately, "there have been few comprehensive empirical studies to gauge the extent of terrorist precursor criminal activity in the United States to date, largely due to the lack of data, there are some indications that such activities may be widespread."³⁸ One of the few studies to have examined precursor crimes is Smith, Damphousse, and Robert's important work examining pre-incident indicators using data from the ATS.³⁹ Although they find that a large percent of the precursor activities of offenders is noncriminal, about one-third of the behaviors were criminal.⁴⁰ There would be great value in documenting the range of crimes that terrorists are involved in, and this study accomplishes this objective. To get a better sense of the types of offenses that state police are concerned about regarding terrorist groups, the authors asked about the involvement of far-right extremists in 13 crime types.

Possible Far-Right and Islamic Jihadist Criminal Collaboration

There is a fair amount of speculation by scholars that terrorist groups might collaborate with other types of terrorist groups (across the ideological divide). Some claim that terrorist groups might cooperate with organized crime syndicates. Although their objectives are different—terrorists usually commit crimes to further an ideological objective while organized crime groups try to make a profit—it appears that terrorists and organized crime groups not only imitate each other but are potential collaborators.⁴¹ Both confront similar obstacles, have similar needs and structures, and run in the same circles.⁴² Shelley discusses how organized crime might provide financial, technical, and logistical support for terrorists.⁴³ Sverdllick explains that

the nexus between them can be described as follows. The terrorists use organized crime activity as a means of economic support. Both often operate in

network structures that at times intersect. The fact is that depending upon the circumstances, terrorists can hide themselves in international crime organizations. Both groups operate primarily in areas where there is a lack of effective governmental controls, weak law enforcement, and open frontiers. Both need corrupt officials to succeed in their goals. Both groups' frequently use the same mass media and new technology to communicate, they launder their money; and, sometimes they use the same methods and structures to move funds.⁴⁴

Others are more skeptical and claim that "ideological differences between terrorist and criminal groups will preclude any cooperation between them."⁴⁵ Since most terrorist groups have short life spans they would be of little value to organized crime groups. Other barriers to collaboration are that terrorist organizations might be viewed as financial rivals. Collaboration could also result in additional law enforcement scrutiny, and many terrorists group seek to publicize their activities whereas organized crime groups usually prize secrecy.⁴⁶ These barriers led some to conclude that "alliances between organized crime and terrorist groups appear highly unlikely."⁴⁷

Other scholarly work has examined whether terrorist groups might collaborate with other types of terrorist groups. Although there are many barriers to terrorist-to-terrorist collaboration, such as ideological divides, conflicting objectives, and discrepancies in skills and resources, there is some evidence of linkages.⁴⁸ Levitt discusses how there is a "matrix of relationships between terrorists who belong to one or another group."⁴⁹ He provides several examples, including senior level meetings between Al Qaeda and Hezbollah as well as person-to-person contacts in support of training and logistics, financing and logistics support between Hamas and Al Qaeda, and training and funding of American Muslims in Portland associated with both Al Qaeda and Palestinian terrorism. Levitt concludes that "Militant Islamist groups from al Qaeda to Hamas interact and support one another in an international matrix of logistical, financial, and sometimes operational terrorist activity. . . . Autonomous cells, regional affiliate groups, radical Palestinian organizations, and groups sponsored by Iran's Revolutionary Guards are engaged in mutual support arrangements, including funding."⁵⁰

There is a need to explore these terrorist-to-terrorist linkages further by examining other types of potential collaborations. Are *ihadists* collaborating with other criminal groups, such as far-right extremists? At first glance the possibility of far-right and Islamic *ihadist* collaboration appears implausible because of their diverging beliefs. Racist segments of the far right consider most Muslims and Arabs non-White, and thus subhuman, and view them as a threat to the White race. White supremacists are anti-non-White immigration. Similarly, *ihadists* consider most non-Muslims to be the enemy and a threat to the Islamic world. However, Michael while acknowledging these differences also stresses areas of commonality, such as: (1) Anti-Semitic ideologies that claim Jews control the United States for nefarious purposes, (2) support for revisionist scholarship that claims the Holocaust did not occur, (3) dissatisfaction with American foreign policy, (4) pro-Palestinian beliefs, (5) ideologies that stress the exclusivity of their group and promise a coming utopia, (6) traditional social values that are anti-pornography, anti-gay, and anti-feminist, (7) criticisms of capitalism that see it as spiritually empty, and (8) support for attacks against their enemies, especially Jews and the U.S. government.⁵¹ The attacks are to be carried out from the "ground up" by lone wolves as opposed to hierarchal centralized group activity. Michael notes that there is historical support for such cooperation. Nazi Germany was supported by the Palestinian leader, the Mufti of Jerusalem in the 1930s and 1940s. Hitler labeled the Mufti an honorary Aryan.⁵² Some Arab nationalists supported Hitler in the 1930s and

1940s while certain racist far-right extremists offered support for Arab rights in the Middle East.

Hamm's conducted case studies on terrorist attacks committed by far-right extremists and Islamic extremists against the United States and "found important similarities between these groups. Perhaps most interesting are the attempts made by domestic [far-right racist] terrorists to forge alliances with international jihadists, uncovered in this book."⁵³ Members of the notorious racist group the Order that committed multi-million dollar armored car robberies and murdered 5 people in the 1980s sought to work with the University of Washington's Arab American Student Union as well as "forge an alliance ... with an official of the Syrian government" to obtain terrorist training.⁵⁴ After the 9/11 attacks a number of far-right racist leaders lauded the hijackers and argued that any enemy of the U.S. government and the Jews was worthy of their support.⁵⁵

Relatedly, the Moors are an extreme Black Nationalist movement that is Islamic but also embraces the antigovernment ideology and tactics of the far right. This movement's support for both far-right ideology and the Islamic faith could conceivably act as a bridge to future cooperation between far-right and *jihadist* extremists.

Importantly, however, the issue of *jihadist* and far-right collaboration is not resolved. Klein's research, conducted between 2003 and 2005, found no evidence that Islamic fundamentalists and White supremacists were working together.⁵⁶ Klein's conclusions were based on exchanges he had with one academic from North Dakota State University, an official from the watch-group the Southern Poverty Law Center, officials from the Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, Arkansas, Ohio, Texas, and Colorado Department of Corrections, a domestic counterterrorism FBI official and a Texas FBI agent, and a Chicago Police Department official. Klein also reviewed documents from the watch-group the Anti-Defamation League. Although Klein's research raises legitimate concerns that the potential for collaboration between far rightists and *jihadists* is overstated, there is a need for research that more systematically asked law enforcement officials about this issue to see whether their knowledge is consistent or contrary to his conclusions.⁵⁷

Research Design

Fielding of the Survey

The goal was to locate the specific officer and/or office charged with tracking extremist activities within each state police agency. This was an important because although this study gauged the perceptions of individuals employed by the agencies, the authors took steps to ensure that the responding officers or analysts were the most knowledgeable about domestic terrorism and extremist issues in each state's jurisdiction. The authors first collected state police contacts from the National Public Safety Information Bureau's 2006 *Directory of Law Enforcement Administrators*. After the survey instrument was pre-tested and revised multiple times it was administered by mail to each state agency. The instrument was accompanied by a cover letter that stated the objectives of the study, and the potential importance of the results. The *Directory of Law Enforcement Administrators* contained multiple listings for many state agencies. The instrument was mailed to the most appropriate officer and office such as the counterterrorism bureau or intelligence office. Three mailings with subsequent follow-up phone calls were conducted between November 2006 and September 2007. The first mailing was administered on 13 November 2006 and the first round of subsequent phone calls occurred between 13 December and 23 December 2006. The second mailing was administered on 11 January 2007 and the second round of

phone calls occurred between 13 February and 19 March 2007. The third and final mailing was administered on 20 March 2007 and the third round of phone calls occurred between 26 March and 14 August 2007. The last surveys were returned in September 2007.

The follow-up phone calls were helpful in verifying that the authors had contacted the correct office and/or officer. These contacts were important because the authors were directed to the most appropriate officer with knowledge of extremist activities to answer the survey and that officer was therefore contacted. Interestingly, the results indicated that states varied in terms of which department or agency housed this officer. Most of the individuals who responded to the survey worked within a state-level fusion center or intelligence bureau. Others officers were located in the state police agency’s department of public safety; in certain states the officer was located in the bureau of investigation, the state attorney general’s office, highway patrol agency, or state office of homeland security. After the three mailings and three rounds of follow-up phone calls forty-two states (84 percent) responded, thirty-seven states (74 percent) returned partial or completed surveys, five states (10 percent) informed the authors that due to legal or policy limitations they were unable to participate, and eight states (16 percent) did not respond.⁵⁸

Description of the Survey

The survey was short but it produced rich data. The overall survey examined how state agencies define terrorism, what resources they use as sources of information on domestic terrorism, what groups and how many exist, how many members exist, how many legal activities groups participate in, what groups they consider as major state and national threats, what terrorist events might occur in their state, how many criminal incidents occur in a typical year, and how many members are arrested.⁵⁹ Most of the questions were structured or semi-structured, but the study also collected additional information using open-ended questions.

This article focuses on three additional sections of the survey: (1) Whether supporters of specified extremist movements tended to commit crimes as lone wolves, with others, or both alone and with others, (2) how frequently far-right extremists tended to commit 13 types of crimes in a typical year, and (3) whether far-right extremists and *ihadists* had cooperated to commit crimes. Table 1 provides a synopsis of the questions asked within these three general sections.

Table 1
Synopsis of survey questions

1. Lone-wolf threat potential	For the following extremist movements indicate whether or not their members/supporters are generally known to commit crimes alone, with others as part of a group, or both alone and in groups?
2. Nature of far-right criminality	How many of the following crime types are committed by members/supporters of the extremist far-right in your state a typical year?
3. Islamic <i>ihadist</i> criminal collaboration	To the best of your knowledge have far-right extremist groups cooperated with Islamic <i>ihadists</i> to commit crimes in your state? If yes, please specify

Respondents were asked whether supporters of 15 types of extremist movements are generally known to commit crimes alone, with others, or both alone and with others in their jurisdiction. The 15 extremist movements were (1) Militia/Patriots, (2) Freeman/Sovereign citizens, (3) Ku Klux Klan, (4) Christian Identity, (5) Neo-Nazi, (6) Reconstructed Traditions (e.g., Odinism), (7) Racist skinheads, (8) Islamic extremists/*jihadists* (e.g., Al Qaeda), (9) left-wing revolutionaries (e.g., Weathermen), (10) Black Nationalist, (11) extreme environment (e.g., Earth Liberation Front), (12) extreme animal rights (e.g., Animal Liberation Front; ALF), (13) extreme anti-tax, (14) extreme anti-abortion, and (15) extreme anti-immigration.

The authors compiled this list of movements based on a systematic review of terrorism-related scholarly and journalistic publications, paying close attention to the types of groups/movements mentioned. The authors also reviewed the major terrorism databases that include attacks in the United States, such as the ATS, ECDB, Global Terrorism Database (GTD) as well as websites, such as MIPT. Although the review used each movement/group and typology mentioned in these works to generate the list, in certain cases these categories may not be mutually exclusive. There are some Ku Klux Klan (KKK) groups, for instance, that embrace Christian Identity, and so on. While in most cases it is likely a group would be categorized according to its primary emphasis, this limitation should be kept in mind.

Second, the survey asked respondents how often far-right extremists tended to commit 13 crime types in their state in a typical year. The 13 crimes were: (1) tax refusal, (2) gun charges, (3) land use/environmental violations, (4) motor vehicle violations, (5) false liens/financial schemes, (6) abortion-related crimes, (7) hate crimes, (8) anti-pornography crimes, (9) antigovernment, anti-leftist ideological crimes, (10) anti-global crimes, (11) preparation or planned use of radiological, biological, or chemical weapons crimes, (12) preparatory crimes committed to further a future planned terrorist attack, and (13) non-ideological routine crimes. These crimes varied in motivation and harm level. This list was generated from a literature review of over 320 studies on far-right extremism. For each reviewed study the authors systematically noted which crime types it linked to the far right.

Finally, respondents were asked whether far-right extremists had cooperated with Islamic *jihadists* to commit crimes in their state. If the answer was yes, the agencies were asked to specify which groups and how many incidents. While recently there has been speculation about possible collaboration between these two movements until now this issue has received little research attention.⁶⁰ To better understand the nature of these collaborative partnerships the authors used additional research methodologies. Specifically, the authors searched for incidents using open source search strategies, and then wrote case summaries about each event identified.

Results

Lone-Wolf Crimes

The respondents were asked to classify the typical nature of offending for 15 extremist movements that included seven far-right (e.g., militias, freemen/sovereign citizens, KKK, Christian Identity, neo-Nazis, reconstructed traditionalists, and skinheads), four far-left (e.g., left-wing revolutionaries, Black nationalists, ELF, and ALF), and three single issue (e.g., anti-tax, anti-abortion, and anti-immigration) movements. The survey did not ask about specific types of *jihadists* but asked in general about the nature of offending committed by *jihadists*. The authors wanted to know if the criminal incidents committed by supporters

Table 2
How typically commit crime by type of movement

Type of group	Act alone	Group	Both alone/ Groups
Far-right groups			
Militias	19.0%	23.8%	57.1%
Freemen/Sovereign Citizens	28.0	8.0	64.0
KKK	15.0	15.0	70.0
Christian-Identity	21.4	7.1	71.4
Neo-Nazi	8.0	12.0	80.0
Reconstructed Traditions (e.g., Odinism)	16.7	0.0	83.3
Skinheads	12.0	16.0	72.0
Far-left groups			
Left-Wing Revolutionaries	0.0	40.0	60.0
Black Nationalists	10.0	10.0	80.0
ELF	9.5	9.5	81.0
ALF	4.5	9.1	86.4
<i>Jihadists</i>	12.5	18.8	68.8
Single-issue groups			
Anti-tax	50.0	5.0	45.0
Anti-abortion	21.4	14.3	64.3
Anti-immigration	6.7	20.0	73.3

of these movements typically were committed by lone individuals, groups, or by both individuals and groups. It was anticipated that most respondents would state that they were concerned with a combination of group-level and lone-wolf activities.

Table 2 presents the findings for the 15 movements. As anticipated, most states noted that they are generally concerned with both lone-wolf and group activities for all movements. The respondents who noted both lone-wolf and group concerns ranged from a low of 45 percent to over 86 percent of respondents. For example, 45 percent of respondents said that anti-tax offenders, 57 percent said that militias and 60 percent said that left-wing revolutionary groups commit both lone-wolf and group crimes. In contrast, over 80 percent of respondents said that neo-Nazis, reconstructed traditionalist groups, Black nationalists, ELF, and ALF committed both lone-wolf and group-level crimes.

Importantly, although state police are generally concerned about lone-wolf and group crimes, a few respondents for each type of movement noted that their concern for lone-wolf crimes was greatest. It is interesting to consider the differences by type of movement. Fifty percent of the respondents said that anti-tax protestors usually commit crimes as lone wolves. In addition, 21.4 percent of the agencies said that both extreme anti-abortion and Christian Identity followers usually commit their crimes alone, while 28 percent of agencies said that freemen/sovereign citizens are most likely to commit crimes as lone wolves. However, only 4.5 percent of the respondents said that ALF, 9.5 percent for ELF, 6.7 percent for anti-immigration, and 8 percent for neo-Nazis usually commit their crimes as lone wolves.

Tables 3 and 4 present these results in a couple of additional ways.

Table 3
How commit crime by general category of movements

General category of group	Act alone	Group	Both alone/ Groups
Far-right groups	16.9	13.2	69.9
Far-left groups	6.9	12.1	81.0
<i>Jihadist</i>	12.5	18.8	68.8
Single issue	28.6	12.2	59.2

Table 3 collapses the individual movement results into four general ideological categories (far right, far left, *jihadi*, and single issue) to highlight differences. Similar to what was presented earlier, the results indicate that far leftists and *jihadists* were less likely to be considered solely a lone-wolf threat compared to far-right extremists and single-issue extremists.

Table 4 presents the general category of movements by state police reports on the number of groups known to exist in their state. The pattern for single-issue groups is interesting. Regardless of the number of single-issue groups reported to exist in a state, the threat of lone-wolf crimes by single-issue extremists was great. Few respondents noted any concern about lone-wolf violence for far-left extremists. Although there was some concern for lone-wolf actions regardless of the number of groups that existed in a state, these concerns were greater as the number of far-right groups decreased. Twenty-five percent of respondents that reported only one far-right group in the state said that there was concern about lone-wolf crimes. Almost 22 percent of respondents that reported only two far-right groups reported concern about lone-wolf crimes.

Nature of Far-Right Criminality

The results presented in Table 5 show that state police officials reported that far-right extremists are involved in a variety of terrorist, preparatory, and routine crimes.

The state police respondents stated that far extremists commit acts that might be defined as terrorism or ideological offenses. For example, 26.7 percent of the agencies stated that far-right extremists are involved in chemical, biological, or radiological crimes and 20 percent

Table 4
How commit crime by general category of movements and number of groups

Type of Group	1 group			2 groups			3–5 groups			6+ groups		
	Acted alone	Group	Both	Acted alone	Group	Both	Acted alone	Group	Both	Acted alone	Group	Both
Far-right	25.0	25.0	50.0	21.9	18.8	59.4	11.6	11.6	76.7	16.4	14.8	68.9
Far-left	0.0	6.3	93.8	12.5	12.5	75.5	0.0	30.0	70.0	0.0	25.0	75.0
<i>Jihadist</i>	0.0	100.0	0.0	33.3	0.0	66.7	25.0	25.0	50.0	0.0	33.3	67.7
Single issue	27.8	16.7	55.6	11.1	22.2	66.7	37.5	0.0	62.5	50.0	0.0	50.0

Table 5
Types of crimes committed by far-right extremists

Type of crime	0 crimes	1–5 crimes	6–10 crimes	11–20 crimes	21–30 crimes	31+ crimes
Tax refusal	25.8	38.7	16.1	9.7	0.0	9.7
Gun charges	18.8	50.0	9.4	3.1	9.4	9.4
Land use/Environmental	35.5	45.2	0.0	0.0	9.7	9.7
Motor vehicle violations	17.2	34.5	3.4	3.4	3.4	37.9
False liens/Financial crimes	27.3	27.3	24.2	6.1	0.0	15.2
Abortion-related crimes	77.4	19.4	0.0	3.2	0.0	0.0
Hate crimes	17.6	50.0	11.8	11.8	2.9	5.9
Anti-pornography	79.3	17.2	0.0	3.2	0.0	0.0
Anti-government crimes	37.5	43.8	9.9	0.0	3.1	6.3
Anti-global crimes	80.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Weapons of Mass Destruction	73.3	26.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Preparatory crimes	71.4	17.9	7.1	0.0	3.6	0.0
Non-ideological routine crimes	46.7	13.3	6.7	0.0	3.0	30.0

reported that they commit a small number of anti-global crimes. Forty-three percent of the respondents said that far-right extremists commit between one and five antigovernment crimes, 6.3 percent reported that they commit over 30 antigovernment crimes, and 19.4 percent stated that they commit between one and five abortion-related crimes in a typical year. Half of the respondents said that far-right extremists commit between one and five hate crimes in a typical year, 11.8 percent said that they commit between six and ten, 11.8 percent said that commit between eleven and twenty, 2.9 percent said they commit between twenty-one and thirty, and 5.9 percent said they commit over 31 crimes in a typical year.

Preparatory and routine crimes were also a concern for state police officials. Nearly 18 percent of respondents said that far rights commit between one and five preparatory crimes, 7.1 percent said that they commit between six and ten, and 3.6 percent said they commit between twenty and thirty crimes.

Interestingly, state police officials noted that far-right extremists are involved in a range of different criminal activities. For example, nearly 10 percent of respondents said that far-right extremists commit over 31 tax refusal, gun, and land use crimes in a typical year. Not surprisingly, nearly 38 percent of respondents said that they commit over 31 motor vehicle violations, and over 15 percent said that they commit over 31 false liens or financial crimes. Importantly, 30 percent of respondents said that they commit over 31 non-ideological, routine crimes in a typical year.

The study examined the types of crimes reported to be committed by far-right extremists by region. Each state was placed into one of four regions: the Northeast, Midwest, South, or West region. In general, there was consistency across region for many of the crimes studied. For example, respondents in all regions reported similar occurrences of abortion-related, anti-pornography, antigovernment, anti-global, preparatory, and crimes linked to weapons of mass destruction. However, there were also some interesting differences across regions.

Table 6
Reports of far-rights committing over 13 crimes by region

Type of crime	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Tax refusal	0.0	0.0	14.3	25.0
Gun crimes	0.0	0.0	28.6	11.1
Land use	0.0	0.0	28.6	11.1
Motor vehicle	16.7	12.5	66.7	55.6
False liens/financial	0.0	0.0	14.3	44.4
Abortion-related	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Hate crimes	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0
Anti-pornography	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Anti-government	0.0	0.0	14.3	11.1
Anti-global	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Weapons of Mass Destruction	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Preparatory crimes	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Non-ideological routine crimes	14.3	0.0	66.7	44.4

States in the Northeast and Midwest regions rarely reported a high frequency of any type of crime, although they did note that they had frequent motor vehicle violations committed by far-right extremists. However, respondents from the South and West regions frequently noted a high number of incidents for several categories of crime. Table 6 present these results.

In the West region, for example, 25 percent of the respondents said that over 31 tax refusal cases occur in a typical year, 55.6 percent reported over 31 motor vehicle violations, 44.4 percent said that over 31 false lien/financial crimes occur, and 44.4 percent reported over 31 non-ideological, routine crimes occur in a typical year. The results for the South region are consistent. Here too state police agencies report a large number of tax refusal, gun crimes, land use, motor vehicle, false liens and financial, and non-ideological, routine crimes in a typical year. In contrast, state police respondents from the Northeast and Midwest regions rarely report a large number of these types of crimes occurring.

Islamic and Far-Right Criminal Collaboration

Two state police agencies reported that Islamic *jihadists* and far-right extremists had co-operated to commit financial/fundraising crimes in their state, with one of the two states noting that cooperation had also occurred in prison. Twelve states reported no cooperation, 20 states reported that they did not know, and three states did not answer the question. Two states that responded “don’t know” commented that these questions should be referred to their joint terrorism task forces (JTTF).

To ensure that this significant issue was thoroughly investigated key words were used to search 22 Web engines: (1) Lexis-Nexis; (2) Proquest; (3) Yahoo; (4) Google; (5) Copernic; (6) News Library; (7) Infotrac; (8) Google Scholar; (9) Amazon; (10) Google U.S. Government; (11) Federation of American Scientists; (12) Google video; (13) Center for the Study of Intelligence; (14) Surf Wax; (15) Dogpile; (16) Mamma; (17) Librarians’ Internet Index; (18) Scirus; (19) All the Web; (20) Google News; (21) Google Blog; and

(22) Homeland Security Digital Library to determine if additional cases had occurred since 1990 and been publicly reported.

Two additional cases were uncovered that involved direct collaborative exchanges between the far-right and Islamic *ihadists*: (1) a convert to Islam was indicted for conspiring to set up an Al Qaeda-inspired training camp on the ranch of a far-right anti-Semitic tax protester in the late 1990s and (2) the FBI recently recorded a meeting between a White supremacist and an Islamic extremist. The two extremists discussed establishing operational ties between their organizations, shooting Jews, and their hopes for an American civil war. Importantly, none of these events occurred in the two states that responded yes on the survey. The authors also uncovered seven incidents that although they were not direct collaboration efforts raise the possibility that future collaboration might be attempted between far-right extremists and *ihadists* or secular Arab nationalists. Brief summaries of these incidents follow: (1) an Al Qaeda recruiter in a video—that was authenticated by U.S. counterterrorism personnel—suggested that Al Qaeda might collaborate in the future with American White supremacists who also hate the U.S. government, (2) a follower of a spin-off of the Aryan Nations arrested on weapons charges allegedly stated that he wished to align with Islamic extremists, (3) a White supremacist arrested on weapons charges had allegedly written that the Aryan Nations should work with Islamic *ihadists* to attack Jews and the U.S. government, (4) a Canadian Security Intelligence mole who spent six years undercover testified at a trial that Canadian far-right extremists had been in contact with American far-right extremists about an eco-terrorism plot they hoped to conduct in cooperation with the governments of Iraq or Libya (the extremists thought the Arab governments would be interested to strike back at the West because of the 1991 Iraq War), (5) a far-right sovereign citizen extremist wanted for a variety of charges including the unauthorized practice of law had documents in his house praising the Oklahoma City bombers as patriots. He had also previously attempted to become legal counsel for John Walker Lindh (an American citizen who had converted to Islam and was captured in Afghanistan fighting for the Taliban), (6) a National Guard member, and a convert to Islam, attempted to pass information to Al Qaeda. The serviceman had previously sought out far-right militia groups in the 1990s, and (7) an immigrant from the former Yugoslavia went on a shooting rampage and killed five individuals at a local Mall. The suspect was wearing a necklace containing a miniature Quran during the attacks. The suspect claimed to be a former member of the KKK and to have had a Swastika tattoo that he subsequently removed. He had also previously threatened to shoot White people like Serbs, and made disparaging comments against homosexuals and African Americans. The authors also uncovered an interesting case where an arrested member of an Islamic extremist cell that had planned to bomb targets in the Midwest was thought to be a member of the Nationalist and far-right Black Moor movement. Finally, it is important to note that the authors are unable to supply names of the individuals involved, the locations of the incidents, or even the sources for these events that were identified through open sources because the project received IRB approval at the authors' academic institutions on the condition that all discussions about specific events would be de-identified.

Discussion

This article examined state police perceptions about terrorism and extremist activities in their state. Although much of the burden of monitoring and investigating terrorists falls on the shoulders of federal law enforcement agencies, state, local, and tribal law enforcement also play a critical role. Policymakers have stressed the importance of multi-jurisdictional

cooperation between agencies and widespread sharing of information.⁶¹ Part of the rationale for this cooperation is the realization that local agencies may possess crucial information related to terrorist planning and terrorist threats. According to Masse, O'Neil, and Rollins, "The 800,000 plus law enforcement officers across the country know their communities most intimately and, therefore, are best placed to function as the 'eyes and ears' of an extended national security community. They have the experience to recognize what constitutes anomalous behavior in their areas of responsibility and can either stop it at the point of discovery (a more traditional law enforcement approach) or follow the anomaly or criminal behavior, either unilaterally or jointly with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), to extract the maximum intelligence value from the activity (a more intelligence-based approach)."⁶²

The survey results confirm that state police agencies possess valuable information about extremist activities in their state. There has yet to be much research that documents state police perceptions of terrorist threats, and the study focused on their concerns about three issues: lone-wolf threats, the criminality of far-right extremists, and awareness about collaboration between Islamic *jihadists* and far rightists.

Many extremists, across ideological divides, preach the importance of avoiding hierarchical organizational models to minimize the risk of outside interference. Lone individuals, although clearly harboring extremist beliefs but unconnected to specific groups, have recently committed a series of high-profile crimes that brought attention to the need for empirical research on this topic. The survey results contribute to this developing area of concern by highlighting state police perceptions about the offending patterns of different extremist movements. Although state police officials note that extremist offending occurs frequently by both groups and lone individuals, the survey respondents also noted specific concerns about lone-wolf threats.

Perhaps the most interesting finding from these results was variation by movement type. Over 50 percent of the respondents reported that anti-tax extremists usually commit their crimes alone. Intuitively, this makes sense considering that some tax offenses are crimes of omission,⁶³ that require no action by the suspect. However, some have also noted that some tax crimes include large-scale schemes that encompass a multitude of persons and groups. State police agencies were clearly concerned about their lone-wolf potential.

Surprisingly, far leftists in general and supporters of ALF and ELF specifically were not seen as usually committing their crimes alone. A number of scholars have noted the great potential for lone-wolf tactics and the apparent embracing of this tactic by far-left groups, especially environmentalists.⁶⁴ Although scholars note this potential, these state police officials report supporters of movement like ELF are among their least concerns for using lone-wolf tactics. This disconnect between academic conclusions and law enforcement perceptions of the lone-wolf threat from far-left and ALF/ELF extremists is interesting and should be looked into further.

State law enforcement agencies reported that far-right extremists and single-issue extremists are more likely to commit their crimes alone compared to other extremist movements. Both movements were seen by over 20 percent of the respondents as generally committing their crimes alone. Many single issue anti-tax and anti-abortion supporters also harbor far-right beliefs. These findings are consistent with Smith and Dampousse's empirical work that shows that far rightists are increasingly using lone-wolf and leaderless-resistance tactics.⁶⁵ These findings also highlight the difficult challenges faced by law enforcement to confront these far-right movements. As noted previously, lone individuals—acting outside of an organizational structure—provide less opportunities for law enforcement to uncover and thwart their objectives.

One of the goals of asking about the amount and types of crimes committed by far-right extremists was to shed light on the debate whether these extremists are generalists or specialists in their criminal offending patterns. Some scholars argue that extremists will only commit ideological offenses, where others argue that they do not discriminate and commit a range of ideological and non-ideological offenses.⁶⁶ The results presented from state police officials surveyed for this project support the latter position. Respondents noted that far-right extremists commit a range of terrorist, preparatory, and non-ideological offenses with some frequency. The results demonstrate that far-right extremists commit a large number of *nonviolent* (financial/false lien/tax refusal) crimes, as well as *non-ideological* routine crimes. Thus, it appears that far-right extremists are committing a significant amount of criminal activity that does not meet the FBI's terrorism definition (that requires the act to be violent and ideologically motivated). Similarly, most scholars who study extremists focus solely on crimes that are defined as terrorism by the FBI or some other political agency. The finding that far-right extremists are involved in range of criminal activities has important research and policy implications.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect is the regional variations that were noted by type of offense. According to the state police officials surveyed here, far-rightist criminal activity is not evenly distributed across the 50 states. Instead, far-right extremists appear much more active in various criminal behaviors in the Southern and Western regions. The Southern Poverty Law Center "hate group map" indicates different variations, with far more activity in the Midwest compared to the West. The differences are probably more an artifact of the data collection strategies, and although there are limits to both,⁶⁷ and highlights the need for additional research to explore state-level variations.

There is a growing body of literature that examines the radicalization process, typically examining individuals and the events that shaped their extreme, terrorist beliefs. It would also be important to do a comprehensive study of the offending patterns of extremists, examining how and when they escalate from committing non-ideological offenses to ideological, and what, if any, differences exists between extremists who commit only ideological crimes compared to those extremists who are just involved in routine crimes.

So too, from a policy perspective, examining non-terrorist (e.g., tax-refusal) ideological crimes might aid law enforcement, especially if these crimes act as stepping stones to more violent terrorist crimes. Some intriguing anecdotal evidence suggests that ideologically motivated tax refusal (and other financial crimes) may act as a "trigger or gateway" to subsequent more serious criminal behavior. This thesis is consistent with part of the hate-crimes literature, which argues that bias-crime perpetrators "escalate" from less to more violent hate crimes.⁶⁸ For instance, Scott Roeder (arrested for the May 2009 murder of Dr. George Tiller of Kansas, who had performed late-term abortions), Gordon Kahl (who murdered three law enforcement officials, before being killed himself in 1983), Robert Matthews (the leader of the notorious terrorist group "The Order," responsible for five murders in the 1980s), and Frank Nelson (the leader of the Minnesota Patriots Council, and one of first to be convicted under the Biological Weapons Anti-Terrorism Act in 1995) were involved in anti-tax actions before their later, more serious, crimes.⁶⁹ As such, law enforcement might consider expanding domestic terrorism task forces to encompass representatives of agencies not normally included, such as state tax agencies, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury Department, and state-land use and zoning agencies.

It is also imperative that local and tribal officers are properly trained to understand that although most traffic stops are routine, traffic stops involving far-right extremists can escalate and are potentially dangerous to law enforcement.⁷⁰ The survey results show that these stops are not uncommon; 30 percent of states reported that far-right extremists are

involved in more than 31 motor vehicle violations in their state in a typical year. Finally, such traffic stops, and other types of offenses involving far-right extremists, might provide important intelligence-gathering opportunities for law enforcement.

The findings that two state police agencies knew of far-right extremists and Islamic *jihadists* cooperating to commit crimes, as well as the uncovering through open sources of two additional cases where far-right extremists and Islamic *jihadists* had cooperated directly are potentially important. Interestingly, the results might undercount the existence of collaboration because the respondents may not have focused on this issue (recall that more than 50 percent of the respondents said they did not know and only 12 states reported no cooperation). Indeed, several respondents referred the authors to the FBI and JTTF contacts to inquire about the existence of such collaborative partnerships. This could be an important omission because, as noted, state police agencies have a crucial role to play in the effort to secure the homeland as they sometimes come across political extremists during their routine policing functions.⁷¹ Future research might consider examining this issue with federal sources as well as officials from correctional institutions.

In addition, the authors documented seven other incidents where far rightists or *jihadists* had expressed aspirations to collaborate with each other or were drawn to both ideologies. These findings are not conclusive but do suggest that additional careful scrutiny of this issue is warranted. The results are consistent with other research that has explored whether there is a nexus between organized crime and terrorist groups and/or terrorist-to-terrorist group linkages. The nature and extent of collaboration is not systematic, but it occurs in specific instances brought on by circumstances. Future research needs to examine these circumstances more closely. These findings also merit careful consideration by law enforcement because far-right extremists and *jihadists* working together might pose a greater threat than the sum of their parts because of each movement's unique skill sets. Far-right extremists may be more familiar with the terrain surrounding critical infrastructures, especially those in rural locations and have access to weapons and explosives, and potential targets, such as food supply chains, that *jihadists* lack. *Jihadists*, especially groups like Al Qaeda, sometimes have a well-established organizational infrastructure that includes substantial resources. At a 2003 Congressional Hearing, Ronald Nobel, Secretary General at Interpol, noted that Al Qaeda has an annual operating budget between 30 and 50 million that is financed by an array of legitimate (e.g., front organizations, business ventures) and illegitimate (e.g., drug dealing, counterfeiting products, and theft) activities.⁷² Noble concluded that "approximately 10% of spending went on operations while 90% was used to maintain the infrastructure of the network, *including payments to other groups to support them*" [emphasis added].⁷³

Additional research is therefore needed to investigate both whether some states have ignored the issue and whether the states that reported collaboration did so correctly. As mentioned in the literature review section, some scholars and agencies are skeptical of collaboration across ideological divides. For example, the FBI JTTF and the FBI National Security Branch have concluded that currently there is no relationship between *jihadists* and far-right extremists. It is possible, for instance, that the two states that reported collaboration did so based on speculative intelligence bulletins that recycle the arguments and conjecture—previously discussed—that support the collaboration thesis. The authors' future research plans include conducting a follow-up survey on this important issue, and other domestic terrorism issues, with the 72 state and major urban area intelligence fusion centers—the organizations that investigate and monitor criminal extremists and criminal enterprises. It would also be important for future research to examine established knowledge about these groups by examining official state-level data.

Conclusion

The study provided an overview of state police perceptions about three important issues. The results are valuable because there has been little previous work that surveys law enforcement, especially local, state, and tribal agencies, about their knowledge and concerns regarding terrorist threats.⁷⁴ Future research must explore these issues further. It is important to examine the criminal histories as well as the *modus operandi* for the offenses committed by a variety of different extremists. For example, if one was to have a sample of court cases involving extremists of different ideological persuasion, one could further examine how often extremists commit crimes alone or in groups, explore differences by type of group, as well as consider whether there are differences by type of offense. There has also been little research exploring the criminal histories of extremists and this is a significant oversight that should be addressed to better understand the pathways to violent, ideological crime. Finally, there are challenges to exploring the points of collaborations across types of groups, but the wide availability of open source documents provides a good opportunity to identify the circumstances where not just far- right and Islamic extremists cooperate, but where there is any evidence of overlapping connections between criminal and terrorist groups or terrorist-to-terrorist connections.

Notes

1. See for example, Joseph R. Carlson, "The Future Terrorists in America," *American Journal of Police* 14,(3/4) (1995), pp. 71–91; Martha Crenshaw, "How Terrorism Declines," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 3(1) (1991); Martha Crenshaw, *Terrorism in Context* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania State University, 1995); Mark Hamm, *American Skinheads: The Criminology and Control of Hate Crime* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993); Mark Hamm, *Apocalypse in Oklahoma City: Waco and Ruby Ridge Revenged* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997); Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York City: Columbia University Press, 1998); David Nice, "Abortion Clinic Bombings as Political Violence," *American Journal of Political Science* 32 (1988), pp. 178–195; Brent L. Smith, *Terrorism in America: Pipe Bombs and Pipe Dreams* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1994); Austin Turk, *Political Criminality: The Defiance and Defense of Authority* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1982).

2. Joshua D. Freilich and Steven M. Chermak, "United States Extremist Crime Database (ECDB), 1990–2008: Preliminary Results," working paper, Department of Homeland Security University Network Research and Education Summit, Washington, DC (2009).

3. Joshua D. Freilich, Steven Chermak, and Joseph Simone, Jr., "Terrorism Threats, Terrorism Sources, and Terrorism Definitions," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 21(3) (2009), pp. 450–475.

4. Steven M. Chermak, *Searching for a Demon: The Media Construction of the Militia Movement* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2002); Steven M. Chermak, Joshua D. Freilich, and Zachary Shemtob, "Law Enforcement Training and the Domestic Far-Right," *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 36(12) (2009); Joshua D. Freilich, *American Militias: State-level Variations in Militia Activities* (New York City: LFB Scholarly LLC, 2003); Joshua D. Freilich, Steven M. Chermak, and David Caspi, "Critical Events in the Life Trajectories of Domestic Extremist White Supremacist Groups: A Case Study Analysis of Four Violent Organizations," *Criminology and Public Policy* 8(3) (2009), pp. 497–530; Chris Hewitt, "Patterns of American Terrorism 1955–1998. An Historical Perspective on Terrorism-Related Fatalities," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 12(1) (2000), pp. 1–14; Gary LaFree and Laura Dugan, "Introducing the Global Terrorism Database," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 19 (2007), pp. 181–201; Smith, *Terrorism in America*. This article operationalizes "political extremists" as individuals who (1) subscribe to a belief system that endorses a political, economic, religious, or social goal, and believe that (2) the American government and/or society is evil and corrupt, and poses a threat to their group and/or cause, and as a result (3) illegal behaviors including

violence against the American government and/or society are necessary (LaFree and Dugan, "Global Terrorism Database").

5. Gary LaFree et al., *Building a Global Terrorism Database* (Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice, 2006).

6. Chris Hewitt, *Understanding Terrorism in America: From the Klan to Al Qaeda* (New York: Routledge, 2003); Also see Steven Chermak, Joshua Freilich, and David Caspi, "Policy-makers and Law Enforcement must Consider the Unintended Consequences of Their Proposed Interventions/Responses to Extremist and Terrorist Groups," in Natasha A. Frost, Joshua D. Freilich, and Todd R. Clear, eds., *Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice Policy: Policy Proposals from the American Society of Criminology Conference* (Belmont: Centage/Wadsworth, 2009) pp. 139–150; Freilich, Chermak and Simone, "Terrorism Threats, Terrorism Sources, and Terrorism Definitions"; Smith, *Terrorism in America*.

7. Joshua D. Freilich and Steven M. Chermak, "United States Extremist Database."

8. Defining the domestic far right is not easy because there is no universally accepted definition and prior research has not sufficiently addressed this issue. Drawing on a systematic review of studies, (see Jeffrey Gruenewald, Joshua D. Freilich and Steven M. Chermak, "An Overview of The Domestic Far-Right and its Criminal Activities," in Barbara Perry and Randy Blazak, eds., *Hate Crime: Issues and Perspectives* (New York: Praeger, 2009) published on far-right extremism in general and its association with political crimes in particular, including important works that offered typologies, definitions, and descriptions (see, for example, Michael Barkun, "Millenarian Aspects of White Supremacist Movements," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 1(4) (1989), pp. 409–434; Chip Berlet and Matthew N. Lyons, *Right-Wing Populism in America: Too Close for Comfort* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2000); James Coates, *Armed and Dangerous: The Rise of the Survivalist Right* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1987); James E. Duffy and Alan C. Brantley, "Militias: Initiating Contact," Federal Bureau of Investigation (1997). Available at <http://www.fbi.gov/library/leib/1997/July975.htm> (accessed 18 November 1998); Martin Durham, "The American Far Right and 9–11," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 15 (2003); Jeffrey Kaplan, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 5(1) (1993), pp. 30–82; Jeffrey Kaplan, "Right Wing Violence in North America," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 7(1) (1995), pp. 44–95; George Michael, *The Enemy of My Enemy: The Alarming Convergence of Militant Islam and the Extreme Right* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006); Wayman C. Mullins, *Terrorist Organizations in the United States* (Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas Books, 1988); Smith, *Terrorism in America*; Ehud Sprinzak, "Right Wing Terrorism in a Comparative Perspective: The Case of Split Delegitimization," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 7(1) (1995), pp. 17–43; see also Betty A. Dobratz and Stephanie L. Shanks-Meile, *White Power, White Pride! The White Separatist Movement in the United States* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1997) and Leonard Weinberg, "The American Radical Right: Exit, Voice, and Violence," in P. Merkl and Leonard Weinberg, eds., *Encounters with the Contemporary Radical Right* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1993), pp. 185–203. This study relies on the following description. The domestic far right is composed of individuals or groups that subscribe to aspects of the following ideals: they are fiercely nationalistic (as opposed to universal and international in orientation), anti-global, suspicious of centralized federal authority, reverent of individual liberty (especially their right to own guns, be free of taxes), believe in conspiracy theories that involve a grave threat to national sovereignty and/or personal liberty and a belief that one's personal and/or national "way of life" is under attack and is either already lost or that the threat is imminent (sometimes such beliefs are amorphous and vague, but for some the threat is from a specific ethnic, racial, or religious group), and a belief in the need to be prepared for an attack either by participating in paramilitary preparations, training, and survivalism. It is important to note that mainstream conservative movements and the mainstream Christian right are not included.

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58. The findings that follow are derived from completed surveys of the state police agencies. Agencies were informed that the researchers would not reveal data from specific states. In addition, institutional review boards (IRBs) granted approval for the project on the condition that data from individual named states would not be revealed. As such, no state names are identified in these findings.

59. See Freilich, Chermak and Simone, "Terrorism Threats, Terrorism Sources, and Terrorism Definitions."

60. Klein, "An Investigation"; Michael, *The Enemy of My Enemy*.

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